

THREE COUNT[©]

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Teams Almost Set For NWA Tourney

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

The 16-team field for the National Wrestling Alliance tag-team tournament is just about complete, with teams abounding from international wrestling circuits according to several wrestling insiders.

Among those on the tentative tag-team roster for the June 16 Clash of Champions in Charleston, S.C. (where the first round of tag-team matches will occur) are The Malenkos (Joe and Dean), Chris Benoit-Biff Wellington, Jushin

Lyger-Brian Pillman, Hiroshi Hase-Akira Nogami, The Head Hunters (a Puerto Rican tag-team comprised of, as I understand it, two 5-6 overweight wrestlers who can do moonsault presses), The Steiner brothers, Bobby Eaton-Arn Anderson, Barry Windham-Dustin Rhodes, Steve Austin-Rick Rude, Ricky Steamboat-Nikita Koloff, The Freebirds, Steve Williams-Terry Gordy, Greg Valentine-Terry Taylor and Marcus Bagwell-Tom Zenk. Two other tag-team entries (from Australia and Mexico) are also expected.

The second half of the tournament takes place on the undercard of the Great American Bash pay-per-view show July 12 from Philadelphia.

The current plan is for the NWA singles and tag-team titles to be contested on an annual basis every year instead of on a regular basis. WCW executive vice-president Kip Frey said the concept would be similar to "the Olympics." For fans of Japanese wrestling, this amounts to the same idea as New Japan's former IWGP tournaments.

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Jushin Lyger, pictured above, will likely team with Brian Pillman in the National Wrestling Alliance tag-team tournament (photo credit -- Dr. Mike Lano).

Sting Out Until PPV

By Alex Marvez
Three Count Editor

World Championship Wrestling Champion Sting will be out of action until the promotion's Wrestle War pay-per-view show May 17 after sustaining injuries in a match with Big Van Vader April 12 at Atlanta's Omni.

Sting sustained a broken rib, two cracked ribs and a bruised spleen when a Vader powerslam attempt turned awry. Nikita Koloff will take Sting's place temporarily in the feud with Vader and at Sting's upcoming dates.

Sting's injury was acknowledged on the telecast, but two pre-taped interviews with Sting still aired. The injury will be announced on WCW syndicated shows on April 25. Expect a Koloff interview to set up the Vader-Koloff feud.

Read This

Three Count is temporarily moving its office for the summer. Please address all correspondences from April 28 to August 12 to 8850 S.W. 19th Street, Miami FL 33165. Any mail sent to the current P.O. Box will be forwarded to the new address. In August, a Three Count Hotline will be installed for fans to leave match results, leave inquiries, etc.

Steroid Tales Told on 20/20

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

The anabolic steroid-laced stories of former pro wrestlers "Superstar" Billy Graham and Ed Gantner received further mainstream attention April 17 on ABC's 20/20.

The story in which both wrestlers, and the sport as a whole, were mentioned was an overview of the steroid situation in society. Also interviewed were former weight-lifting champions Steve Michalik and John DeFendis, who say they sustained health problems from long-time use of the muscle-enhancing drug.



Hulk Hogan

A brief summary of Graham's steroid use and current physical condition were given, with Graham stating his hip needed replacement and both his ankles would not bend because of long-time steroid abuse. Graham said

Arnold Schwarzenegger, a friend of Graham's during the 1970s, could not have obtained his formerly massive physique without steroid use.

Schwarzenegger wasn't the only body-builder fingered by Graham.

"Hulk Hogan has taken steroids from the late 1970s and through the whole 1980s and lied about it," Graham said. "To be successful in pro wrestling, you absolutely must take steroids." A clip of Hogan wrestling was shown, with 20/20 reporter Tom Jarriel stating Hogan refused

comment on Graham's claim. Jarriel did say that Hogan previously denied using steroids "for body-building purposes."

Also told was the story of Gantner, the former USFL defensive end (Jarriel reported Gantner played for the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers, when actually it was the Tampa Bay Bandits) and pro wrestler who committed suicide in December of 1990. Gantner began using steroids while a junior in high school, and continued regular use until he was diagnosed as having 90 percent failure of his kidneys in 1987. Gantner received a kidney transplant through his older sister in 1988, but returned to using the drug later in the year. Further physical problems developed for Gantner, as well as psychological trauma from being without the drug, leading to his suicide.

The only other wrestling related comment came from Michalik, who said, "When I ran my gym, I had many pro wrestlers ask me for steroids. It runs rampant in professional wrestling."

Sheet Spotlight

Here's a look at the top stories of some of the other wrestling newsletters, with subscription information:

• **Dave Meltzer's Wrestling Observer Newsletter** (April 13): Lengthy Wrestlemania VIII report and analysis of *Now It Can Be Told* WWF story; First to report story in the *Allentown Morning-Call* on WWF sexual harassment allegations, provide complete transcript of Roddy Piper refuting WWF scandal and discuss the **Phil Mushnick-Steve Planamenta** war in the *Charleston Post-Courier*. Weekly; \$1.50 an issue. P.O. Box 1228, Campbell CA 95009-1228.

• **Wade Keller's Pro Wrestling Torch** (April 16): Lengthy interview with WCW executive vice president Kip Frey; Well-written editorial by Bruce Mitchell on the Titagate scandal; Regional reports from 18 different promotions. Weekly; \$1.25 an issue (Free sample available). P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis MN 55420.

• **Steve Sims's Lucha Libre Weekly** (April 7): A well-written analysis of how the EMLL promotion managed to get **Konan** and **Love Machine** over as babyfaces; Comprehensive lucha results from Mexican television and house shows, and results from Japan. *Es muy bueno*. Weekly; \$1 an issue. 1427 West Dickens Ave., Chicago, IL 60614-3003.

• **Jeffrey Cohen's Fantasy Federation** (April-May): Interesting editorial comparing Ric Flair's WWF stint with Harley Race's; Fantasy matches with Dustin Rhodes vs. Barry Windham, The Undertaker vs. Mean Mark Callous and Flair vs. Riki Choshu. Bi-monthly; \$1 an issue. 50 Shelley Lane, Great Neck NY 11023.

• **Andrew Goldberger's From The Ring** (March 11): A column describing the Japanese wrestling promotions written by **Hisaharu Tanabe**; Fascinating story of **Ted Hobgood's** wrestling class at Bowling Green University; Explanation by **Tony Rumble** why he no longer is booking IWCCW. Thought-provoking fare. Bi-weekly; \$1.50 an issue. P.O. Box 6, Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776.

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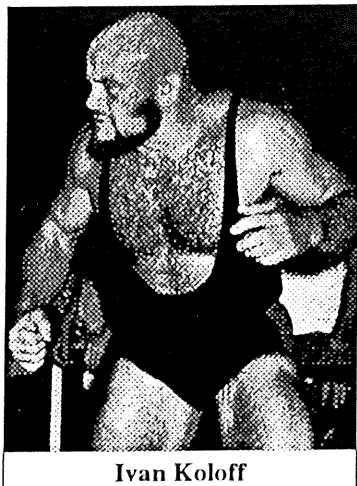
Alex Marvez..... Editor/Publisher
Carol Hernandez..... Production
Paul Hanlin Jr..... Columnist
Carlos Rey..... Lucha Libre
John Muse..... Japan

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Briefly

• **A** *Current Affair's* scheduled April 21 telecast of a piece concerning charges of sexual misconduct against the World Wrestling Federation was postponed for one week, according to *Wrestling Observer Newsletter* editor **Dave Meltzer**. Meltzer, who was interviewed for the story, said the tabloid show decided to wait a week at the request of the WWF, which said it needed more time in considering a rebuttal for the piece.

• **Danny Parris** attended a United Wrestling Organization April 6 in Green, S.C., before 195 fans. **Wahoo McDaniel** defeated **Ivan Koloff** via disqualification in 12:19 when **Vladimir Koloff** did a run in. On the undercard, **Bambi** defeated **Peggy Lee Leather**, **Angel Cruiser** defeated



Ivan Koloff

Lance Gaylor, **Bill White** and **Vladimir Koloff** went to a 15-minute draw and **The Bad Boyz** topped **The Desperados**.

• **World Championship Wrestling's** hard luck at the box office continues in just about every city -- except Jacksonville. In the two weeks since tickets for their May 17 **Wrestle War** pay-per-view show have gone on sale, WCW has sold more than 1,000 tickets. The total advance sales for a WWF show May 4 in Jacksonville, also at the Jacksonville Coliseum with **Randy Savage vs. Ric Flair** as the headliner: 98. Among the promotional events scheduled by WCW prior to the PPV is an appearance by **Johnny B. Badd** at the city's dog racing track the night prior to the show.

• **WCW** rotated its event coordinators once more. **David Crockett** has been promoted (???) to Director of Venues, Tapings and Special Events. Crockett, who had been promoting for WCW on the West coast, is in charge of ensuring that such things as lighting, camera location and arena configuration are correct for taped WCW shows. The only major change in event coordinators came when **Chip Burnham** was shuffled once again. Burnham is now in charge of promoting Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

• **WCW** filmed two more installments of **WCW Saturday Night** on April 14, with Atlanta Falcons offensive lineman **Bill Fralic** as guest for the April 25 show and **Jason Hervey** of **The Wonder Years** for May 2. **Steve Austin** will wrestle **Barry Windham** in a two-of-three fall match on Fralic's show, while a 38-minute **Arn Anderson vs. Big Josh** bout highlights Hervey's telecast. "As far as technical things go, I feel we're starting to get a lot closer to where I want to be with the Fralic and Hervey episodes," WCW executive vice president **Kip Frey** said. Television ratings for the first two shows have been low, with the inaugural telecast garnering a 2.2 rating and the show with Frey as guest host pulling down a 2.1. WCW had averaged about a 2.4 in recent months with virtually a non-squash match format.

• **Fralic** will be part of a WCW angle involving his status as a restricted free agent with the Falcons. Fralic will threaten to sign with the wrestling group if his contract is not renewed.

• **The Patriot (Del Wilkes)** is touring for All Japan Pro Wrestling in May, putting his upcoming WWF stint on hold. Names being tossed about for possible upcoming tours are **The Long Riders (Bret Colt and Kip Winchester)** from **Eddy Mansfield's International Wrestling Federation**, **John Tatum** and **Rod Price** from the **Global Wrestling Federation** and **The Giant Outlaw (Bob Garst)** from **Suncoast Pro Wrestling**.

Three Count TV Summary

The following is a new weekly feature briefly summarizing some of the wrestling/body-building television action featured during the past weekend. In future weeks, this report will be expanding to cover more areas.

WBF Body Stars

Highlights: More hilarious **Lex Luger** cut-ins during **Vince McMahon-Came Kneur** footage; Well-produced vignette of body-builder **Jim Quinn**.

Lowlights: A close-up of a WBF poster focusing on **Kneur** in a position with her legs spread wide open; Footage from the Los Angeles Sports Club. One interview was conducted with a woman where the camera went from her face, to her breasts for about two seconds and then back to her face while she was talking.

WWF Superstars of Wrestling

Highlights: The best interview ever given by **The Ultimate Warrior**. Crisp and coherent, The Warrior talked about his upcoming feud with **Sid Justice** surrounded by children; A video of **Crush (Bryan Adams)** as a child, where a child actor crushes a can instead of the Lincoln logs he was playing with; A good job setting up the **Berserker-Undertaker** match for next week's telecast.

Lowlights: Footage of WWF performers at a children's hospital prior to **Wrestlemania VIII**. Whatever happened to the days wrestlers did charity work because they wanted to, not because they were covering up for their boss's bad publicity?; The return of **Kerry Von Erich**, with Von Erich stating he had "rededicated himself to religion, his family, his country and the WWF." McMahon added that Von Erich had taken a "little bit of a respite," i.e. he had been arrested twice on drug charges; **Joe Weider** commercials.

WCW Saturday Night

Highlights: A well-produced vignette of **The Freebirds** in concert; The segments with **Jim Ross** and **Dusty Rhodes** taped without crowd noise were better than the ones done at the Center Stage studio.

Lowlights: **Sting** sounded like an idiot during his interview segment with **Ross** and **Rhodes**; **Rhodes** kept trying to put himself over throughout the show, even comparing himself with **Scotty Flamingo**; Not enough was done to emphasize **Sting's** injury; The **Nikita Koloff-Larry Zbyszko** two-of-three falls match, with **Koloff** winning both falls with a schoolboy cradle and **Russian sickle**, was mediocre; The sound mixing, on the whole, is still terrible; **Joe Weider** commercials.

Suncoast a Knee-Knocking Show

I like to claim that my stomach rarely turns in anticipation, that my knees almost never knock and my voice always stays calm instead of cracking.

Then came my television debut on Suncoast Pro Wrestling April 18, and all those boasts flew out the window.

My girlfriend, Carol, and friends **John Patton** and **Alfonso Barreiro** traveled with me from Gainesville to Bradenton (a 2 1/2 hour drive) to watch me perform on the

Alex Marvez



show. On the way down, between reading for my constitutional history class, I thought of what **Scott Hudson** must have felt like when he debuted on ESPN. Hudson was also a long-time wrestling fan who was given the opportunity to stop being a fan and become part of the show.

The show drew 250 people (89 of which paid), almost all of which was return business from previous Suncoast shows. Promoter **Henry Raines** has run Suncoast shows since 1988, and the group is scene on several stations up-and-down the west coast of Florida.

When it appeared **Shannon Rose** would be unable to fulfill his duties as ring announcer for the taping (he was to be honored for having the best sports-related public access talk show in Florida for the second consecutive year), Henry asked me if I could fill in. When Shannon's ceremony was postponed until a few weeks later, I offered to do commentary instead. Surprisingly, Henry agreed to let me announce the main event match (**Penelope Paradise vs. Debbie Malenko**), and the subsequent mixed tag-team match that followed. Little did I know that I would end up doing more. I'll tell my story as I run down the results of the show.

1. **Rico Federico** defeated **Kino McKenzie** to retain the Suncoast Florida title. Federico used a leg submission hold, and grabbed onto Penelope's hand for extra leverage. Federico has worked in the Maritimes, and would be a good addition to WCW's light-heavy-weight stew.

2. **Dean Malenko** (the Suncoast Southern champion) defeated **Bobby Blaze** with a northern lights suplex. Malenko looked super, and has learned to work a crowd much better through his facial expressions and moves. Barreiro and Patton thought this was the second best match of the night.

3. **Vern Henderson-Gator Gilmore** defeated **Cody Bear-Damion Stone** to retain their Suncoast tag-team titles. Bear and Stone were both visiting from New Jersey, where they had worked several independents. They both plan on moving to the Tampa-area in June. Henderson super-plexed Stone for the pin. Gilmore was supposed to keep Bear from interfering, but he tripped over Stone's outstretched leg and landed on his stomach.

Interspersed between those three matches were two Penelope's Playhouses. One was with Henderson and Gilmore, and the other with Federico and **The Masked Superstar (Bob Cook)**.

Then came the debut of "Three Count with Alex Marvez." Let's just say I'm no **Roddy Piper**. In my first interview segment, I spoke with **Debbie** and **Dean Malenko** for 3 1/2 minutes, basically just trying to get over their characters. Debbie is very inexperienced doing interviews, but she comes across as so genuine (which she is) that it more than makes up for any hesitation. I didn't realize Dean was such a good interview. Photographer **Bill Otten** (who attended with **Jimmy Suzuki**) told me I sounded nervous, but **Larry Malenko** told me it was a very different sounding interview because I asked intelligent questions. Before we went on the air, Dean and Debbie were both spouting off ridiculous comments to make me laugh. Dean said, "Dave Meltzer," and I said, "Jim Herd." My knees stopped shaking five minutes after the segment ended.

4. **Ian Weston** pinned **Johnny Pavros** with a splash off the top rope. This match was slapped together at the last minute, as "Mexican strongman" **Jose Lopez** was forced to no-show after an eye injury.

5. **The Giant Outlaw (Bob Garst)** defeated **Federico** via disqualification in a match featuring the main angle of the taping. Garst was substituting for **Jumbo Baretta**, who no-showed the card and threw several matches into chaos. At the end of the match, there is a referee bump. Penelope climbs to the top rope (wearing high heels ala **Madusa** I might add) and jumped toward The Outlaw. He caught her (barely) and powerslammed her, knocking her "cold." The Outlaw then acted like he didn't mean to do it and ran from the ring. Penelope was escorted from the ring holding her neck. Talk about grooming smart fans while they're young ... Henry's 21-month old daughter didn't see the powerslam but saw Penelope being escorted from the ring. She demanded to go back to the locker room to make sure Penelope was OK. But had Henry's daughter seen the bump, he says, she would have known it was a work.

6. El Tigre defeated Blue Demon with a rolling guillotine. Tigre was supposed to help draw some of the Mexican population in the area. That idea failed miserably. Tigre didn't even work lucha style. Highlights were Demon wrestling in his jeans (prompting Henry to joke he should have been named "Blue Denim") and Tigre yelling "maricon" (translated: homosexual) at his opponent. Henry should hope he has no Spanish-speaking censors watching.

Then came my second Three Count segment, which came across much better than the first. I began interviewing Penelope when The Outlaw entered the ring. He apologized for powerslamming her, which, to my "amazement," Penelope accepted. Penelope and I then spent 60 seconds trying to get over the bump on her head that she took from the powerslam brought about some sort of change in her personality.

7. Dean Malenko pinned The Outlaw by turning a power-bomb attempt into a frankensteiner. That was the nicest move in a disappointing match. It didn't make too much sense to have Outlaw wrestle as a heel two matches after he worked as a babyface, but Henry explained to me that Outlaw is a loner-type character whose had his problems with both babies and heels.

Afterward came another Penelope's Playhouse with Debbie Malenko as her guest. Despite Debbie's inexperience on this interview, this was the best Suncoast interview segment I had ever seen. Debbie brought out a trophy, calendar and magazine from Japan showing her at work. While showing them, Penelope's proteges, The Superstar and Federico, were making snide remarks. Penelope kept saying, "Soupie, stop." It was great. It ended with Penelope agreeing to wrestle Debbie cleanly in the upcoming two-of-three fall match.

8. Weston won a non-title match from The Superstar (as in, no man holds a title). Superstar was using the ropes for leverage on an abdominal stretch, but Penelope forced him to relinquish his grip, leading to the pinfall.

9. Henderson-Gilmore defeated The Southern Posse (Rick "Superfreak" Thames and Sonny T) when Sonny interfered on a Henderson pin attempt following a super-plex on Thames. All four brawled after the match, but the Posse sold way too much in this match to build anticipation for a rematch.

10. Debbie Malenko (Debbie Killien) defeated Penelope via disqualification in the best match on the card. I feel immense credit should be given to Henry for promoting women's wrestling on the top of an all-male show. For fans of women's wrestling, this is a must-see match because of the unique style of work. Both wrestlers do not use the traditional women's style of wrestling, with hair pulls and shoddy brawling. This was scientific move after move. The two shook hands before the first and second falls, with Paradise winning cleanly

in the first fall with a small package and Malenko forcing a submission to a Bob Backlund-style chicken wing in the second. Highlight of the second fall was Malenko doing a Great Muta-style Indian deathlock and a surf-board. Between the second and third fall, Penelope sneak-attacked Malenko and took the advantage for the next four minutes until Debbie made the comeback. Superstar (who was at the announcing table with Henry and me) jumped up to offer Penelope encouragement. Debbie went for a move of the ropes, and was supposed to tumble over as Superstar pulled the ropes down. Superstar was late, so the spot didn't come off. Debbie, though, showed great poise as she went ahead with a front-bulldog (the move that Sting does). She went off the ropes a second time, and the two still screwed things up. But this time, Superstar grabbed her and pulled her over, signalling the disqualification. About 30 seconds later, Dean Malenko made the save for his "sister." This led to Henry making the decision to make this a mixed tag. Thus...

11. The Malenkos defeated Penelope-Outlaw via disqualification when Federico interfered. This match saw the heels have the advantage most of the way until the babyface comeback. Federico ran in the ring and hit Dean in the back of the neck for the DQ. Penelope then gave Debbie a great looking tombstone piledriver. As both Malenkos were left laying in the center of the ring, Federico climbed the top rope to jump onto Dean. At the last second, Debbie covered her brother and got the brunt of the blow. Henry jumped up to give attention to Debbie, leaving myself and The Outlaw to handle commentary by myself. I enjoyed the angle, but the group screwed up when Dean merely helped a stumbling Debbie from the ring instead of having her stretchered out.

Notes: Well, I guess I did a good job as a color commentator because Henry wants me to comeback for the next Suncoast taping in September/October. About 12 weeks of television (30-minute shows) were taped that night, and "Best of Suncoast" shows are airing until mid-July...Suncoast will run house shows May 16 and July 25 in the mean time in Bradenton. Wendi Richter vs. Penelope is the main event of the May show, while Debbie will be back for the July shot. Raul Mata is also working for Suncoast in May. I will be in Jacksonville that weekend for the Wrestle War '92 card, and am making the 3 1/2-hour drive to the show that day.

Other Upcoming Florida shows: Blackjack Mulligan vs. The Possessor (Ned Brady) and Kendall Windham vs. Cliff Anderson highlight an IWF show at 7:30 p.m. April 25 at Tampa's Golden Nugget Flea Market. The IWF also has an April 30 show scheduled for the Melbourne Hilton. WCW runs April 30 in West Palm Beach with Nikita Koloff-Ricky Steamboat vs. Steve Austin-Rick Rude in the main event.

Spotlight on: John Arezzi

In an amazing twist of irony, a man named Vince has almost caused the downfall of **John Arezzi's Pro Wrestling Spotlight** empire. Only this Vince wasn't **Vince McMahon**, the World Wrestling Federation owner who Arezzi has lambasted for years on his *Pro Wrestling Spotlight* radio show -- regarded as the nation's most influential wrestling radio show and one of the most ardent followers of the WWF's steroid and sexual abuse stories. A split between **Vince Russo**, Arezzi's former business partner, and wrestling radio's "round mound of sound" has left the future of the *Pro Wrestling Spotlight* radio show and newsletter in jeopardy. Russo just produced his first issue of the newsletter without Arezzi, but the finished product bore no resemblance to *Spotlight's* first 12 issues. Russo has taken a pro-WWF stance, calling newsletter writers "liars" for their coverage of the WWF. Arezzi's own version of the *Spotlight* show aired April 19 on WEVD in New York with **Paul E. Dangerously** as a guest, and appears to have at least a short-term future in the time slot. The first half of the two-part interview saw Arezzi explain how his *Pro Wrestling Spotlight* radio show became involved with Russo, why the show moved from WGBB in Babylon to its new radio station (a move that Arezzi said Russo ordered) and the development of his *Pro Wrestling Spotlight* newsletter and radio show in the wake of the WWF's steroid and sex scandals. In the second half of this interview, Arezzi discusses the final days of the Russo-Arezzi split after Russo attended the WWF's steroid symposium March 24 (the WWF news conference announcing **Dr. Mauro DiPasquale** as the head of their new steroid testing program). Arezzi was barred from attending the symposium.

JA: I didn't hear from Russo all day Tuesday. I figure this was a big enough story that I should hear from the guy, so I decide to play devil's advocate. He never called. The next day, he calls me and says we have to talk, and would I come into the office. I was ripping inside, because I felt the WWF was using us, and I didn't know what their motive was. Russo told me we really had these guys (the WWF) by the balls. He said they laid out the red carpet for him at the symposium. He started talking about all this stuff about (Dr. Mauro) DiPasquale and other bullshit. He said he was sitting there with (WWF spokesman) **Steve Planamenta**, and it was really nice, having lunch with **Linda and Shane McMahon** (**Vince McMahon's** wife and son, respectively) and they were really nice people. He said Vince even came over and talked to him for half an hour. I asked what they discussed. He said Vince told him that we don't realize how much fun a wrestling radio show can be. I asked what does that mean, and he said, "John, this is our chance. We need the WWF to make any money. We've been spinning our wheels for four months, not making any money." I tried to pry even further, and he said they want to meet with us and work together. Russo said they talked about a possible promotion with *Prime Time Wrestling*. I said, "You don't understand. I don't trust them. They just want us off the air. They're going to try to fuck us one way or the other." Russo then said I had done all I could covering this story and it was time to drop the ball and "let other people cover this crap and start to make some money." I'm reading between the lines and see something happened at the meeting I'm not happy about. I told him to set up a meeting to see what this is all about. I was ready to blast these people if they offered us money. Russo had a smile from ear to ear, and I left the office thinking I've got Judas with me and I don't know what to do. I called Dave (Meltzer, editor of *The Wrestling Observer Newsletter*) and told him everything that was going on. He told me I was dead in the water. He said the WWF had got their hooks into

him

On Thursday, I got a call from Russo, who said he had booked DiPasquale on the show for that Sunday night. I said, "Oh yeah? Well, fine." We were also going to have another guest on the show, but I kind of got the feeling that how he got DiPasquale on so fast had to be through Titan Sports. I said it was alright, and I would get the literature on the symposium. This didn't sit right with me. He didn't even consult with me before booking him. It was Vince trying to take over even more. On Friday morning, the shit hit the fan. My head was swimming with all that was going on. I began to feel everything I was working for was slowly being taken away. But there was no way I was going to get into bed with the devil, no matter if I was broke. There was no way he was going to get to me by paying me off. That morning, Russo calls me and said that because he got DiPasquale booked for the Sunday show, he wanted equal time. I asked him why, and he said he wanted to talk about (*New York Post* columnist) **Phil Mushnick** and how unfair his reporting has been. He brought up the column where Mushnick compared McMahon to **Hannibal Lecter**, and said that was a personal attack against Vince. I said he was not going to give an editorial on the air, but if he wanted to debate Phil on the radio, it was fine with me. Phil is the only guy in the mainstream media with enough balls to follow the story and write the way it is. So he said it was alright to do a debate.

Shortly after, I think he read the *Post* with Phil's column about the symposium, because Vince calls back five minutes later screaming at me about "how could I feed this guy all these lies on the WWF and the symposium?" I told him I didn't do that, we were supposed to be partners on the same team, and not to ever accuse me again of that. I wasn't even there. So I said I was going to get Mushnick on the phone and clarify the situation. I get both of them on a three-way call. I asked Phil where he got the information in his column from,



John Arezzi

and he said it was from a *USA Today* reporter he talked to. Vince then started lashing into Mushnick about how he personally attacked McMahon. They started getting into argument, and as soon as Mushnick began to defend himself, Vince hung up on the both of us. I called Vince back and said I was going into the office. I said to myself that I had to get rid of this guy right now because he's a monster. I didn't know what was going to happen, but Vince was certainly someone I did not want to be responsible for.

I went and picked up my brother-in-law as a witness, because I was going to break up the partnership. We got there, sat down and I told Vince I didn't want to be associated with anymore. He says, "You know, you're broke now, and you're going to be broke for the rest of your life. You're missing an opportunity here that will never happen again. You've been in the wrestling business for years, and you never make any money. Oh, and by the way, I own the name 'Pro Wrestling Spotlight.'" I said that if the name means that much to him, he could have it. Later on, I changed my mind, because it was the name I had been using for the past 17 years. Vince then crumbles a *New York Post*, throws it at me and walks out of his own video store. I'm sitting here shaking my head, and I begin to pick my stuff up and leave. I was trying to get him back into the building so he could see I was just taking my personal stuff, but he just left.

I get back to the house, and I start getting calls from WEVD saying Vince called here saying that our partnership was over, he's not associated with the show and he wants to take a two-week hiatus and return with an all-new show. Vince said he could get some WWF guys on. I said, "This is my show. How can you listen to this guy when he's not the host of the show." But I was lucky, because I had signed the final contract between Pro Wrestling Spotlight and the station. After much talk with the station, they agreed to renew my contract that Sunday night and give me exclusivity with the only wrestling radio show on the station, and the option to renew every month. It worked out by the grace of God. Russo and I had a cordial conversation before I went on the air Sunday. I asked if I could get my mailing list, he said he would have to think about it. We got (former *Matwatch* editor) Steve Beverly's mailing list, but Steve has never received a penny so far. Fortunately, I got most of the names back through the backup system I had.

On March 29, I got a call from Bob Raissman, who wanted to write a story for the next day in the *New York Daily News*. After the story came out (March 31), I called Russo up for copies of the double issue all about the steroid scandal. It was the one I was most proud of. It looked nothing like what it was supposed to be. Incidentally, he didn't send it to any of

the sheet writers or send any samples. He sent to subscribers only. It really freaked me out.

AM: What happens to all the people who paid for a subscription basically to read your views and are stuck with Vince's newsletter?

JA: I feel sorry for them. I'm going to try to make amends in some ways. He said he was going to continue on with the newsletter. I'm fighting for the name Pro Wrestling Spotlight back. I had to by Issue 12 at the news stand. About the 450 subscribers we had, I've decided to offer anyone with a subscription three free months of my newsletter if they send a copy of a cancelled check.

AM: Could you elaborate further on Issue 13 (the one Vince put out)?

JA: The cover is headlined, "Who is the real monster?" and has two kids running away from Barry Orton, myself and other members of the media. A reporter wearing a *New York Post* hat is saying, "Listen you kids -- I know it's not true, but I need a story" (referring to the incidents of sexual molestation claimed by former WWF ringboy Tom Cole). I got a copy, and all I could feel was...not even anger, but I was very sad, because this guy is a very pathetic case. The newsletter should have been written by Vince McMahon. He blasts Raissman from the *Daily News*, Dave Meltzer...He did a whole story on Phil Mushnick calling Phil a liar. He said the lying and deceit from his so-called colleagues in the newsletter field was too much for him to handle.

AM: Have you been able to gauge a reaction from former *Spotlight* readers toward the new format?

JA: On that Saturday, my phone was ringing all day. "Did you see what that Judas wrote?" some of them said. I got calls throughout Saturday and Sunday with people seething mad at this guy. I did a live remote from the Press Box Cafe in Brooklyn (April 12) with Johnny B. Badd. I was getting ready to make the introduction to the show when the whole crowd starts chanting "Russo sucks." It shocked the shit out of me. That's just the sentiment of the fans. The outpouring of support I've gotten about this whole thing...

I poured my heart out that night about the break-up, and my phone was ringing non-stop for two days after. The letters I've gotten have been tremendous. I never anticipated that amount of response. I feel very low and cheap when I ask people to send money. It makes me feel worthless. I think I put on an entertaining product. I give people what they want. One good thing is that professional people listen to this show from a good demographic background. There is a melting pot of people in the entertainment and corporate fields who love the type of information I provide for them. They do what they can to support us. Unfortunately, they are about one to two percent of the audience that listens in.

A lot of people may think in the back of their minds that I'm crying wolf. They won't realize I'm not until the airwaves are blank for a few weeks and the Vince Russo Show is on the air. This is a very questionable time for me. I'm tired of asking for money. I don't want to do it anymore. I want to get advertisers and sponsors for my show.

Wilson Replies; WM VIII Comments

Dear Alex,

I wish to be heard in regard to **Robert Trobich's** letter in *Three Count* 29 concerning my remarks about the 1956 consent judgement against the National Wrestling Alliance.

1) Regarding wrestler treatment, one of the issues specifically addressed by the consent judgement was the NWA's practice of blacklisting wrestlers. In addition, the decree dealt with monopolistic practices, which affected wrestlers' employment opportunities and arbitrary ceilings on compensation and also, therefore, wrestler treatment.

2) Regarding attempts at a cover-up, not only did the NWA want to avoid a public trial, but NWA president **Sam Muchnick** tried to get the Justice Department to forego public announcement of the consent decree. When that failed, Muchnick asked the Justice Department to announce the decree in Iowa on a weekend so it would not receive much press notice. In 1975, the NWA retained former Missouri congressman **Frank Karsten**, then a Washington D.C. attorney, to lobby the Justice Department into amending the consent decree, but he was unsuccessful. Subsequently, the NWA's counsel for many years was **Tench Coxe** of Atlanta's silk stocking law firm Troutman Sanders (Sanders referring to former Georgia governor **Carl Sanders**. Coxe also was an officer of Georgia Championship Wrestling for many years -- an interesting conflict of interest). That firm's activity involved not only strictly legal representation (such as defending the NWA in a half-dozen anti-trust lawsuits in the 1970s), but also an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the Justice Department to dissolve the consent judgement in the early 1980s.

3) Regarding public access to this information, although the final 1956 consent judgement is technically "in the public domain," the Justice Department's extensive and prior paperwork is not "available for anyone's review" as is asserted by Trobich. To locate the 3,000+-page file, as well as the FBI's 300+ pages of investigative reports, you have to take the time, effort and expense to secure access through the Freedom of Information Act at both the anti-trust division of the Justice Department as well as at the FBI. Other documentary evidence supporting my claims was generated in the discovery associated with the half-dozen anti-trust suits against the NWA in the 1970s -- documentation to which at least Trobich has access to.

4) Interestingly, Trobich's own letter (which essentially defends the NWA, denies my allegations and carries a veiled threat to me about crossing the line from opinion to defamation) actually demonstrates the extent to which NWA attorneys are committed to protecting the business rather than seeking the truth.

5) Another fact that Trobich has wrong is that I wrestled 20 years ago. Not true. I wrestled last seven years ago in 1985. As for Trobich's remark about my pursuit of limelight, he is right for the wrong reasons. Yes, I've been trying for years and years to interest the public in the labor practice problems and abuse of pro wrestlers, and I shall continue to do so until a wrestler's union is established and state athletic commissions become something more than tax collectors.

I also wish to comment on your introduction to both of my radio interview installments. Why do you characterize my commentary as having "some quite essentric" (sic) claims and that it is "hard to say" whether they are true? I notice that this editorial caveat is not routinely placed on introductions to other interviews you publish, and

yet you want your readers to believe that you are evenhanded. You obviously are not. This sort of editorializing, before the reader has even seen what I have to say, is gratuitous and pre-judgemental, two unattractive qualities in a journalist, even a student journalist.

-- **Jim Wilson**
Marietta, GA

AM: For those of you who did not read Wilson's two-part interview in *Three Counts* 27-28, here is a little background. Wilson is a former NFL player who became a pro wrestler in 1968. In 1973, Wilson claims he was blackballed from the business because he would not have a homosexual encounter with promoter **Jim Barnett** (a well-known story in wrestling circles that is not disputed). Wilson has been working for almost 20 years to unionize pro wrestling, and appeared on ABC's *20/20* in 1985 to discuss his plight. Trobich responded via telephone on April 20 to Wilson's letter. Trobich commented on the following sections of the letter:

1) Trobich said his main point of contention with Wilson's interview came from *Three Count* 28. Wilson expressed the opinion that "any state where there is not a wrestling commission is contributing to a degree of any injuries or deaths that occur (in the ring) because of the lack of physicals and requirements..." Later in the same breath, Wilson said "promoters have gone to every length...to pay off people through the system in these states to deregulate or keep (a commission) out. Even up to Washington D.C., where there is a federal consent judgement that was put into place in 1956. It is a well-known fact the NWA has paid big-time money to high-priced law firms to keep this thing covered up and out of public scrutiny."

Advertisements

• **Wade Keller** of P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420, is selling copies of his *Pro Wrestling Torch 1991 Yearbook* for \$10. Enclosed in the 98-page book are year-end awards in 28 different categories, a summary of Japanese news for 1991 and detailed explanations of the Japanese promotions and their top stars, a retrospective on the history of Portland wrestling and several humorous parody pieces.

• **Evan Ginzburg** of P.O. Box 471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing NY 11364, is selling a 50-page annual of his publication *Wrestling Then and Now* for \$7. Enclosed is coverage of regional promotions from years past, as well as copies of clippings, line-up sheets and match results. Ginzburg also has slated numerous articles, histories and interviews in the yearbook.

• **Harry White** of 1075 McCausland, St. Louis MO 63117, is selling a two-hour video tape of this year's Cauliflower Alley Club meeting March 21 in Los Angeles for \$7.50. On the tape are interviews with 20 wrestlers, including Lou Thesz, Buddy Rodgers, John Tolos, Karl Von Hess and several other legendary figures.

• **Bill Steffen** of 815 W. Market St., Greensboro College, Greensboro NC 27401-1875, is looking for any paraphernalia concerning the *Honky Tonk Man*. He is also interested in obtaining a copy of the *Saturday Night Main Event* telecast featuring a segment entitled "Honky Tonk Man's Greatest Hits."

• **Verne Langdon's** Slammers Wrestling Gym offers more grappling paraphernalia than you can shake a stick at. Instructional videos, T-shirts, license plate frames, etc. Write to P.O. Box 1602, Studio City CA 91614, for more information.

Trobich said Wilson's interview gave the impression the 1956 judgment was connected with medical commissions. The two, Trobich said, are completely separate, as the 1956 decision concerns anti-trust matters only.

2) Trobich said the NWA's unsuccessful attempt to have the consent order removed in the early 1980s may not have been so unsuccessful had the matter been pursued further. The NWA dropped pursuit of the matter, likely because it ran out of money to continue.

3) Trobich said the Freedom of Information Act applies to all decisions handed down by the government, and is not a hurdle that the NWA set up.

4) Trobich said Wilson's letter was very well written, and was more organized than his appearance on **Ric Carter's** *Wrestle Talk* radio show where the interview was held. "My biggest problem is when Jim talks about the NWA paying people off," Trobich said. "That is a serious accusation. You don't say words like 'pay-off' or 'cover-up.' You need some darn good proof."

The only reason I prefaced the interview with the "acentric" disclaimer is that some of the things said on the show were serious accusations. Quotes such as "(**Ted Turner**) has been the big pay-off guy down here in the state of Georgia to keep (a wrestling bill for a commission) from becoming reality because of his greed," and "(**Turner and Vince McMahon**) have paid off everyone from the governor in Georgia to people back in Washington to keep (the athletic commission) under wraps and make sure the guys don't get something of a protective nature in place" would be considered outrageous by most. Believe me, I don't believe the NWA has a pristine past, and I support many of the objectives Wilson is talking about. It is sad none of today's wrestlers care enough to try and get unionized to prevent numerous injustices in the sport from continuing. If proof is available concerning any of the above quotes, I will print the information here.

Dear Alex,

Some brief comments on *Wrestlemania VIII*:

Shawn Michaels vs. El Matador was a good opening match, with Michaels showing great potential in singles competition. **Roddy Piper vs. Bret Hart** was my favorite match on the card. Hart is the best wrestler today, and I hope the WWF keeps him. Piper showed he can still put on a tremendous match when it counts. I hope the response to this match will encourage others like it, pitting two opponents with great potential whether or not they are both babyfaces or heels. The eight-man tag-team match and **Rick Martel vs. Tatanka** were both pretty dismal, although Tatanka does show enough potential for the future.

Randy Savage vs. Ric Flair was my second-favorite match, and quite a shocker. I really did not think that Flair would drop the belt so soon. **Mr. Perfect's** interference was perfect and the match was intense. **Money Inc.** features talented wrestlers, but they could show off little against **The Earthquake** and **Typhoon**. I will never understand the push for this match-up, and I hope we have seen the last of it. **Hulk Hogan vs. Sid Justice** was as good as it could be. It was a fitting departure for Hogan if he does not return, but I think he will. I enjoyed the match, Justice was over big and bad, and Hogan was vintage Hogan.

I have a few questions. Was the **British Bulldog-Berserker** match cut out because of time? Is **The Ultimate Warrior** back full-time, and will he feud with Justice? What are **Brutus Beefcake's** plans? If Hogan signs with New Japan, will he have an opportunity to wrestle **Big Van Vader**? Is **Mr. Perfect** ready to return to the ring? Are the *Wrestlemania* non-participants (**Warlord**, **Beverly Brothers**, **Barbarian**, **Jimmy Snuka** and **The Bushwhackers**) still on board?

-- Steven Smith
North Miami Beach, FL

AM: To answer your questions, the **Bulldog-Berserker** match was nixed because of time, and **Warrior** will feud with Justice. I don't expect **Beefcake** to be around until/if Hogan returns to the ring. It doesn't look like Hogan will jump to New Japan, but I'm sure a Hogan-Vader match-up would occur if he did. Mr.

(Continued on Page 12)

Ring Recall

Savage-Steamboat a Miami Classic

By Charlie Mattos
Special to Three Count

When I sat down to write this feature, many angles and matches came to mind. The wonderful **Sammartino-Zybyszko** feud from the late 1970s...the **Hogan-Orndorff** battles from the mid-1980s...the shock of **The Ultimate**

Warrior actually gaining a clean pinfall on **Hulk Hogan**...

Perhaps, though, my favorite "Ring Recall" took place February 19, 1987. That night, I was witness to perhaps the finest match I had ever seen 'live.' The Knight Center in downtown Miami was the site for the Intercontinental title defense of **Randy Savage** against challenger **Ricky Steamboat**. While both these guys are still capable of working a four-star match in 1992, back in 1987 they were in their prime.



Ricky Steamboat

The match had everything you could ask for in a classic. Good solid technical wrestling, high-flying maneuvers, lots of good brawling and a dramatic finish. Also, both men's faces were, as **Gordon Solie** would say, "crimson masks" by the end of the match.

Midway through the match, Savage gained several near pinfalls on Steamboat. He landed an awesome elbow off the top rope at the 16-minute mark, only to have the referee unable to count Steamboat down because of an earlier referee bump. Steamboat made the comeback, and appeared to be on the verge of winning the belt. As the referee administered the "one-two-three" on Savage, the bell rang and "pandemonium" erupted. The near-sellout crowd popped like I had never heard before. However, shades of **Dusty Rhodes** booking would soon follow, as the announcer informed us the 20-minute time limit had expired. Hence a draw.

The crowd was drained. Many simply sat and rested for a few moments before leaving the arena. I think most fans realized they had seen an amazing main event. Some 38 days later, these two would put on their famous *Wrestlemania III* match at the Silverdome. But in my mind, that Thursday night at the Knight Center is the match between the two I will always remember.

"Ring Recall" is a feature for Three Count readers to contribute memories of one of their favorite wrestling moments for publication every two weeks. Entries should be no longer than 300 words. Subscribers whose contributions are printed will receive that issue for free.

Rhodes Could Learn From Mexico

A footnote to last week's column. The result of the Hulk Hogan-Antonio Inoki rematch of the 1983 IWGP final was the second re-start of the match after it had gone to two countouts.

When we last convened, I was discussing the delicate nature of booking finishes to important wrestling matches, whenever and wherever they occur. Here's a few ways to do so, based on my experience both as a non-informed *and* a more-informed fan. Not just for both major groups,

Paul Hanlin Jr.

but for any U.S. group promoting wrestling.

Shoehi Baba ("Giant" to his buddies) is the booker of All Japan Pro Wrestling, 1991's Promotion of the Year in both the Pro Wrestling Torch and Wrestling Observer. It's his duty to maintain the land-office business that his group does every night, with a feud that has its roots back in 1990: **Jumbo Tsuruta vs. Mitsuhiro Misawa**.

Baba's formula for success? From the bottom of the card to the top, there are clean finishes in every single match. No countouts, no disqualifications, no outside interference. The problem with that, however financially successful you become, is that the same people wind up fighting the same people every week on TV. Also, the promotion's top star -- Tsuruta -- doesn't have to do a job 99 percent of the time. Still, when Tsuruta has to put someone over, even if it's only once a year, it means something.

All Japan Women's Wrestling is like their male counterparts, with one telling difference -- everyone, repeat *everyone*, does a clean job at some point. Plus, they make all their workers retire at the age of 25, which seems cruel on the surface, but it forces the group to constantly develop new talent. There is not just one star, because all of them are stars.

Riki Choshu, the booker for New Japan, had mysterious success with the "anyone-gets-pinned-at-anytime" philosophy. Those of you who have the video tape of their three-night stand at Tokyo Sumo Hall ("GI Climax Series") have in your possession a microcosm of how wildly successful that style of booking can be.

It's possible they don't have to expand frequent flyer miles to look for the elixir which will cure their ills. Perhaps they need look no further than Mexico, where Lucha Libre's technicos and rudos (babyfaces and heels)

trade clean victories and have a little brouhaha along the way with heel referees and the like. All of these are good suggestions for the future. Let's briefly note what's already happened.

WCW, circa 1989. The year Terry Funk tore up the joint with his wrestling and his interviews. A month before the Baltimore Bash that year, **Ricky Steamboat** faced Funk (already announced as **Ric Flair's** challenger for the pay-per-view show) on a Clash of Champions. Funk won by disqualification, the worst possible result for a man who needed to be put over as the top heel wiping out everyone in his path before his match with the champ. On the flipside, Steamboat did put over U.S. Champion **Lex Luger** on the Bash, as Luger was being groomed for Flair down the road. But **Sting**, who was scheduled to wrestle Funk at house show matches leading to the PPV, refused to put Funk over. Sting would not sacrifice a bit of his own heat for the good of the company. How was Steamboat, who did, rewarded? With a pink slip after WCW verbally agreed to a deal. How was Sting rewarded? One guess.

WCW, 1992: **Dusty Rhodes** has a choice. He can book pre-1989 style, with run-ins and non-decisions, as was prevalent at the most recent TV tapings, and lose more fans. Or he can take a look at his fellow match-makers, who are rolling in the money, and learn something.

From this end, the lucha libre model seems to be the best way at getting people interested in wrestling again. Clean pinfalls and submissions with a liberal dose of post-match fireworks. Combine that with **Dave Meltzer's** excellent suggestions for guys still on the sauce (if you're blatantly suspected of being on steroids, you get jobbed regularly on television), and watch things take off. If everyone does jobs, the unpredictability of who will win increases the appeal of fans who need to be given a reason to come back. If you don't do a job when it's your time to do it, you're gone. Boom! A close runner-up for WCW to consider would be the All Japan Women's style, sans the mandatory retirement age.

People are tired of finishes that rip them off, where the stipulations of the match change without promoters even bothering to tell the fans about it. Think it over. Fans *not knowing who's going to win*, being guaranteed a *genuine finish*, causing *genuine suspense*. We can't have *that*, can we?

Why not?

*Paul would appreciate any comments, objections or biting criticisms to his weekly column. Send letters, etc. to **Three Count** or 5283 Glenlock St., Philadelphia, PA 19124.*



Early Action Carries EMLL Show

(Editor's note: The headline to last week's column was incorrect, and is my fault, not Carlos's.)

The Galavision EMLL show that aired was not a bad one, especially with the first matches containing some new talent. What was disappointing, though, was the last match, which contained workers with great potential who did not use it. The show began with announcer **Alfonso Morales** telling the viewing audience that to have been a great wrestler, you had to have wrestled at Arena Mexico. Clips of the NWA world light-heavyweight bout

Carlos Rey



between **Lizmark** and **El Satanico** were also shown, with Satanico winning the title. Satanico is scheduled to defend the title in Japan April 18 against **The Ultimate Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai)**, a match which Satanico will most likely lose.

1) This match brought us some new talent as the team of **The Maya Warriors (Guerrero del Futuro/Warrior of the Future; Guerrero Maya/Maya Warrior; Damian el Guerrero/Damian the Warrior)** defeating tecnico team of **Los Metales (Oro/Gold; Plata/Silver; Bronze/Bronze)** in two-of-three falls. We all know how good the Metals are, but what took me by surprise were the Guerrero brothers (not to be confused with Chavo, Hector, Eddy, etc.). I thought for sure the metals were going to walk all over them, especially Damian, the weird looking one. In the first fall, Plata was pinned by Maya following an elbow drop off the top rope, Oro was pinned by both Maya and Futuro after getting worked over by all three and Bronze could not answer the count. The second fall went to los technicos after two amazing lances (leaps from the ring) by Oro and Bronze left Futuro and Damian unable to come back in before the count, and Maya ended up getting pinned by Plata. The third fall was very exciting, with far too much action to follow. At one point, the Metales had frustrated the Guerreros to the point they were beginning to turn on each other! This could have gone either way, with plenty of near falls. The turning point came when Oro went for another Lance and accidentally hit his partner, leaving Bronze at the mercy of the rudos to get pinned easily. Oro accidentally broke his nose and mouth with the lance. Two of the Guerrero brothers are former UWA stars **Jose Luis Feliciano** and **Black Terry**.

2) The rudos gained another win when **Roco Valente-Tony Arce-Vulcano** defeated **Filoso (Catlike)-Iga (Masao Orihara)-Koga (Takayuki Nakahara)**. This match obviously featured more new talent, and turned out to be very exciting thanks to the fast-paced moves of the Japanese wrestlers. That, mixed in with the rugged brawling of the rudo team known as **Los Destruyores del Ring**, was just right for a second match. In the first fall, Iga pinned Vulcano with a belly-to-back suplex into el puente (a bridge), Koga made Arce submit and Filoso

made Valente submit to a type of armbar submission hold. The rudos totally dominated the second fall, quickly gaining a pinfall on Iga, kicking Filoso into submission and leaving him unable to answer the bell. The rudos continued their domination in the third fall, when they forced the tecnico captain Iga to submit, ending the match.

3) The technicos finally gained a victory as **Mano Negra (Black hand)-Atlantis-Mascara Sagrada (Sacred Mask)** defeated **Jerry "El Puma" Estrada-Fuerza Guerrera (Warrior force)-Emilio Charles Jr.** in two-of-three falls. This match had the potential to be good, and sure lived up to its expectations. This match brought old rivals Charles and Atlantis together again. Supposedly, this feud is so bitter that while both were doing a benefit for muscular dystrophy, Charles attacked Atlantis! Imagine what those kids must have been going through. Anyway, the rudos took the first fall with Guerrero and Estrada making Sagrada and Atlantis (the team captain) submit. I'd like to point out that Charles power-bombed Atlantis prior to the pinfall, but while bringing him down, kneed Atlantis in the groin. This should call for an automatic disqualification, but heel referee **El Gato Montini**, who saw the whole thing, did nothing. The second fall had Sagrada gain the pinfall on Estrada and Negra pinning Guerrero, forcing Charles to flee the ring and surrender the fall. The third fall had everyone pouring it on, but Charles (the rudo captain) ended up getting caught in Atlantis's torture rack and submitting.

Before the main event, a very good interview was conducted with referee **Wello Rangel**, who was asked about his decision to disqualify **Love Machine (Art Barr)** on last week's show for the use of the martinete (piledriver) against **Blue Panther**. The decision ended up costing Machine his mask. Rangel answered that he knew in other matches that using the martinete was not automatic grounds for a disqualification, but in his matches, he said he was just as responsible for the wrestler's well-being as the ringside physician. Thus, he would not allow career-ending moves.

4) The rudos took another match as Satanico (The Satanic One)-**La Fiera (Fierce Beast)-Espectro de Ultra Tumba (Spirit of the Ultimate Tombs)** defeated **Love Machine-Black Magic (Norman Smiley)-Ultimate Dragon** in two-of-three falls. Panther came into the ring wearing a neck brace, saying he was unable to wrestle because of a neck injury sustained by Machine. At this point, Machine attacked Panther unmercifully, which did not go over with the crowd well at all. The announcers tried to justify Machine's action by stating Panther didn't belong in the ring, but the fans did not buy that excuse. The low point of this match was the Dragon. He didn't do anything, and at one point he was just walking around in the ring. Magic and Machine got the beatings of their lives. After being fouled, Magic was pinned by Fiera, Espectro pinned Dragon and Machine got counted out to end the first fall. The second fall had Magic pin Fiera with a suplex into a pinning combination and the others unable to answer the bell. The third fall saw Fiera win via pinfall after using another low blow that was not called.

Letters

(Continued from Page 9)

Perfect should return to wrestling at the end of the summer to feud with Flair. The Warlord reportedly was suspended for 60 days, and Snuka was released last January. The Beverly Brothers will feud with the Legion of Doom. The Bushwhackers and Barbarian are still around, but no idea who they will be programmed with.

Dear Alex,

After reading *Three Count* 29, I couldn't help writing in with my summary of Wrestlemania VIII.

For the first match, I think Michaels vs. Santana should have been more exciting. The ending was awful, but Michaels has improved greatly and looked good physically on the show. **Jake Roberts vs. The Undertaker** was a little unrealistic. A few weeks ago, Roberts hits Undertaker dozens of times with a chair and it doesn't faze him. A punch from Roberts at WM VIII leaves 'Taker hunched over in pain. The match had a good ending, but the camera showed Roberts' head was at least one foot from the ground. The Legion of Doom interview seemed funny because of how many people in the crowd had L.O.D. signs, even though they weren't wrestling on the card.

Although it was a great match, the ending of the Hart-Piper match wasn't effective for Hart, making it seem like he barely won. Flair vs. Savage was also a great match, although all the officials blocking Liz from coming to ringside made no sense. The kiss by Flair should carry the feud for a while. **Lex Luger** looked huge! It was a good interview with him, and good advertising for the WBF show. I'm surprised he wasn't watching WCW's Main Event show.

I liked **John Muse's** proposed scenario for the eight-man tag-team match (from *Three Count* 28), and Muse was right that the less said about Tatanka vs. Martel the better. The Ultimate Warrior looked awful. Is that the same Warrior or is it a new guy? If it is the same one, then it is living proof steroids can change your appearance. I heard a rumor that it was **Kerry Von Erich** who ran in. Is that true? On a scale of 1-to-10, I gave it a seven.

One question: Why was **Jim Neidhart** fired from the WWF? It seemed like The New Foundation would win the tag-team belts. What did he do that was so bad?

-- Robbie Bloom
Longwood, FL

AM: That was the real Warrior who saved Hogan from the double team. I believe certain WWF front-office personnel wanted to retain Neidhart, and some wanted to ditch him for personal reasons I am unclear of. I do think Owen and Bret Hart eventually will make a better New Foundation than Neidhart and O. Hart.

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